

via pacis

The voice of the Des Moines Catholic Worker community

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Border Atrocities Continue



The land is cut in half by a steel barrier at Nogales, Arizona-Mexico.

At the Border

by Mary Ann Koch, longtime volunteer at the Des Moines Catholic Worker

Ever since Trump started talking about building more border walls, I have felt the call to go to the United States-Mexico border to witness as an advocate against all borders. In the spring of 2016, I got to go to the border in Nogales, Arizona-Mexico with School of the Americas Watch.

With all the recent reports of hundreds of migrants crossing the border each day and all the derogatory rhetoric being used to describe the people coming across our southern border, I had

to go again. A Franciscan sister friend of mine lives in El Paso and serves at one of the hospitality houses supervised by Ruben Garcia and Annunciation House. When I contacted her, she invited me down to stay with her while I volunteered at Casa del Refugiado, where she is the evening supervisor from 2:00 to 10:00 pm, but often ends up staying much later. Casa del Refugiado is a large warehouse which was recently rented (a generous donor is paying for the first three months' rent) and converted

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Concentration Camps

by Patrick Stall

At some point in your life, you have probably been asked what you would do or where you would go if you could go back in time. Many people respond to this question first with some version of "Oh, well, after I killed Hitler," or "stop the Holocaust." This is because most people think that, when confronted with an unmitigated, unmistakable evil, they would do everything in their power to end that evil, most to the point of risking their lives. Unfor-

tunately, most people are wrong. Most people find it easier to go about living their lives as political evil descends around them. Americans today don't need a time machine to know how they would respond to political horror. Do you want to know what you would have done in Nazi Germany? It's easy. You would do what you did today.

We live in a country that operates concentration camps where children die in hellish condi-

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June 29th "No War in Iran" Rally

by Frank Cordero

Twelve brave souls stood out during one of the hottest moments in the warmest day of the year with a simple message: "No War With Iran."

In the photo below, the Des Moines Catholic Worker and Veterans For Peace local president, Gil Landolt, is holding a poster that was used back in 2003 when the United States was about to invade Iraq. It was changed a few years later, during the United States efforts to take down Iran. Now, 16 years after its first use, we have the same message.

The big difference this time is the location for our local demo. Today, Iowans have a direct and personal connection with the military's killing weapons systems. Beyond the 10,000 Iowans who have left the state to fight directly in the post 9/11 United States-led wars in the Middle East, we Iowans also have our very own Armed Drone Command Center! In other words, we have our very own local "war crime" killing machine! We stand against its directives to target, kill, and assess the kill of any human being on the planet, all at the hands of one human being at a computer stall on the south side of Des Moines.

**No U.S.-led Wars in the Middle East!
No U.S.-led Drone Warfare Anywhere!**



President of Veterans for Peace Chapter 163, Gilbert Landolt, displays his anti-war sign in front of the Iowa Air National Guard Drone Command Center. Photo by Jade Suganuma

via pacis

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

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THE DES MOINES CATHOLIC WORKER COMMUNITY

The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community, founded in 1976, is a response to the Gospel call to compassionate action as summarized by the Catholic Worker tradition.

We are committed to a simple, nonviolent lifestyle as we live and work among the poor. We directly serve others by opening the Dingman House as a drop-in center for those in need of food, clothing, toiletries, use of a phone, toilet, shower, or just a cup of coffee and conversation. We also engage in activities that advocate social justice.

BECOMING A DES MOINES CATHOLIC WORKER

We are open to new community members. For information about joining our mission, contact any community member by phone (515-214-1030) or email (dmcatholicworker@gmail.com) .

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BISHOP DINGMAN HOUSE

(Drop-in Center and Business Phone)
1310 7th St.
Des Moines, IA 50314
515-214-1030

Monday - Closed
Tuesday 3pm-6:30pm
Wednesday - Closed
Thursday 3pm-6:30pm
Friday 3pm-6:30pm
Saturday 12-2pm
Sunday 3-6:30pm

PHIL BERRIGAN HOUSE

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Des Moines, IA 50314
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515-777-2180

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Norman Searah, Ed Bloomer, Annie Patton, Charlie Faraday, Celestino Ramirez, Gil Landolt, Al Burney, Frank Cordaro, Ruth Hart, Patrick Stall, Jade Suganuma, Ryna-Ria Ignacio, Jakob Whitson, Oscar Buchanan, Madeleine Terry

WEEKLY COMMUNITY MASS

Friday 7:00pm at Phil Berrigan House.
All are welcome. Call to confirm.

MONTHLY VETERANS FOR PEACE MEETING

Phil Berrigan House. For more information, contact Gil Landolt at peacevet@hotmail.com or call 515-333-2180.

WEEKLY AA MEETING

Fridays, 4:00 pm, Berrigan house

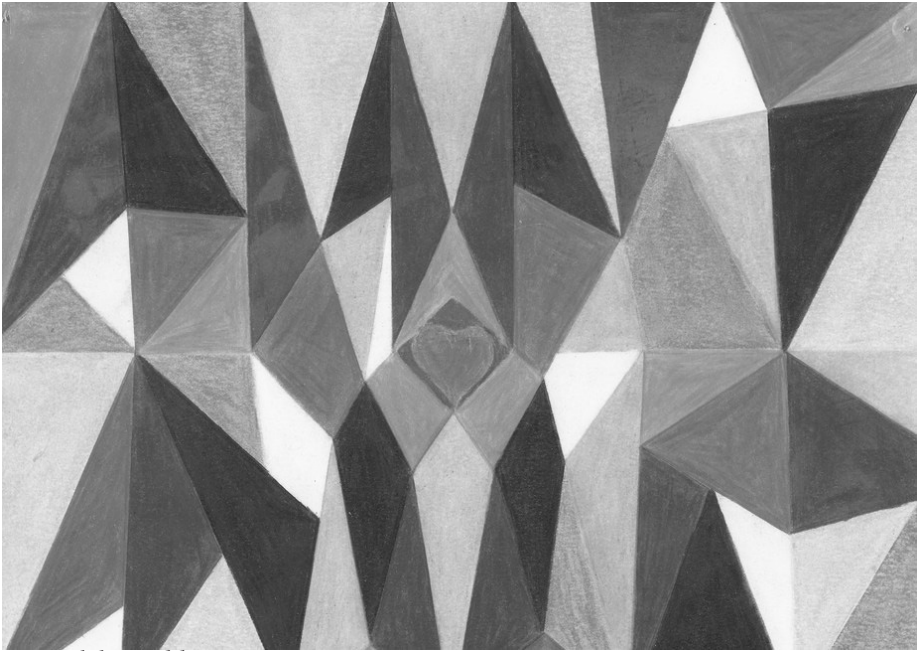
THE CHIAPAS PROJECT

Chiapas, Mexico
Richard Flamer
flamerrichard@hotmail.com



As for ourselves, we must be meek, bear injustice, malice, and rash judgment. We must turn the other cheek, give up our cloak, go a second mile.
-Dorothy Day

Poetry and Art Corner



Artwork by Todd A. Berry

Walk On

by Travis J. Wolfkill
Written in 2012

I try and recall lost manuscripts
From the hand of one who abandoned bliss
I come to the conclusion that
I'm just a masochist
Ranting of insanity
A man without a family

Suicide, friend of no one
I sent pleas to you
Did you know I wrote them?

I need some amusement
In this life of abusement
Between heartbreak and bullshit
I'm on my last limb

Dawn approaches
Prayers are worthless
Life is precious
Only if you want it

They build prisons
For when people say "fuck it"
And they build caskets
For when people say nothing

I still have my inner light
So I continue to write
Take my hand and walk on

Sadistic Shakespeare

by Travis J. Wolfkill
Penning on January 20, 2011

Lonely and feeling
That time is fleeting
It's been a struggle to feel
The bars don't negate my meaning
In pain from a soul detained
The horror. The rage. The despair. The shame.
My time as a fish nearly subtracted the sane

Can you feel this and empathize with my illness?
If my enemies kill me will they get fulfillment?
The world's a stage but the Director's a hack
There's blood on the script, who wrote the Act?
My humanity rather sadly is undermined behind these walls
And I am inclined to say Forget it All
Yet somehow feel like there still might be meaning

A Note from the Poet:

"I chose the pieces *Walk On* and *Sadistic Shakespeare* because they both portray a very dark side of prison life. I no longer look at my horrible

situation with the suspicion that life has no real meaning. I know it does. Even if I am the only one who decides what is meaningful.

It is my intention that my poetry will inspire, uplift, and motivate other human beings. Depression can be transformed into creative energy." - Travis J. Wolfkill

Travis John Wolfkill has been serving a life sentence since the age of 19. He is the author of Diary of a Satanist, and his articles have appeared in Playboy, The Humanist, and several websites and newsletters. Mr. Wolfkill is a strong advocate for prison reform, as well as LGBT issues.

Unseated

by Todd A. Barry

I didn't know what happened
My brain imploded like a seeded cloud
Was that a reflection or something on the mirror
Anyhow or I think it was the image of Jesus
Burned into a burial shroud

The bells were ringing so loud as the stream
Slipped silently away
In the desert the sun has no pity as the
Mirages begin to sway
Insects seem impervious to mother nature's scorn
It's been going on for eons in the wind sings
Her ancient song

Hi-ho said jack
The deck is stacked
Lay your cards on the table can't you see I'm all in
The dealers eyes were obscured but you couldn't
Mistake his grin

The cavern was cold n' empty
Those glittering gold nuggets turned to gold dust
Rust never sleeps upon the weary
The forlorn gather bed ragged and teary eyed

Wow... is that some new fangled gadget or
Just a slight of hand or a magician's trick
Giddy up.. Time to go as the entertainment
In this one horse town is getting slow

On my knees I crossed the desert sand
In the background the coyotes formed the wind section
Of the beckon rock band

Hey.. Hey.. Ho.. Ho.. where did the painted pony
N' Geranimo go
Hey.. Hey.. Ho.. Ho.. where did the painted pony
N' Geranimo go..
Was it to the valley or the sea
The legend says he laid down his rifle n' let it be
Riding off into the sunset.. Nothing but dust on
His trail.. Nothing but dust on this trail.

Todd A. Berry is currently serving time in Cranston, RI.

Third Annual Armed Forces Day Rally and Direct Action

by Frank Cordaro

The third annual “Honor Vets Ground Drones” Armed Forces Day rally and direct action at the main entrance of the Iowa Air National Guard Drone Command Center took place Saturday, May 18 at 3 p.m., as planned, right before a major thunderstorm hit Des Moines! Twenty-five people gathered to protest Des Moines’ Armed Drone Command Center.

Gil Landolt, Des Moines Catholic Worker and President of the Des Moines Bill Basinger Veterans for Peace chapter was the first to speak. Gil speaks from his heart, as a vet, for vets. Its always moving to hear him speak.

Our second speaker was Susan van der Hijden, one of three European peace activist visiting the States and joining us in Des Moines for this witness. Susan is from the Amsterdam Catholic Worker.

The third speaker was myself, Frank Cordaro. I read a news release and an official kick-off announcement of the “End Drone Warfare Presidential Candidate Pledge Campaign.” The Des Moines chapter of the Veterans For Peace and the Catholic Worker are joining **KnowDrones.com** in getting presidential candidates to sign a pledge to do the following:

“1. Stop all attacks by United States drones and close all United States drone control centers inside and outside the United States

2. Work for an international ban on weaponized drones.”

The final speaker was Des Moines Catholic Worker, Jakob Whitson. Jakob was wearing a



Photo by Jade Suganuma

green jump suit with a big white heart painted on the back with an “A” in the middle of the heart. He shared about recent dreams and past dreams, and then connected them to the “work” of the Drone Command Center (see speech below). Dreams connected him to the victims of drone killings and experiences of the fear and death at the other end of the Drone Command Center’s work.

At the end of Jakob’s talk, he joined fellow Des Moines Catholic Workers, Frank Cordaro, Ruth

Hart, and Eddie Bloomer, along with Jerry Ebner, a Catholic Worker from Omaha, in walking on the drive to the closed gate and guard house at the entrance to the base. Jakob was also carrying a ladder.

The rest of the folks walked behind them, five to ten yards away.

As soon as the five reached the closed gate, Jakob put his ladder up against the gate and immediately climbed up. He was greeted with a crowd of base security (some with guns), and told not to climb over.

Jakob complied and climbed down his ladder. He joined the other four holding the banner.

After announcing three separate times over a loud speaker that we were going to be arrested if we did not move off the base, (enough time for everyone else to get back to main gate and public property), all five were arrested, cuffed, and taken by police transport to Polk County Jail.

The five Catholic Workers spent the night in jail in the holding cells with a thin blanket and a cement slab or floor as a bed. All five saw the judge in morning. Four pled guilty and were given fines. Ruth pled innocent and has a court date. All were released by 2 p.m. on May 19th and were back at the Catholic Worker for shift! We plan on repeating this action until the killing at the Drone Command Center ceases.

Prophetic Dream Witness

A speech by Jakob Whitson at the Drone Command Center

Good afternoon! I first want to recognize all of the folks that have come before us, all of the peacemakers: Berrigan Brothers, Franz Jagastatter, Ammon Hennacy, Dorothy Day, Indigenous people - the Meskwaki, Martin Luther King Jr., Thomas Merton, and many more. I also want to recognize the peacemakers with us today at the Drone Command Center and around the world: Julie Brown, Daniel Hale, Chelsea Manning, King’s Bay Plowshare 7, Kathy Kelly, Carol and Ardeth, Brian Terrell, Greg Boertje-Obed, Four Necessity Valve Turners, John Dear, Karl Kabet, Jeff Dietrich, Steve Baggerly, Mike and Barb, John LaForge, Jessica and Ruby, Elliot Adams, Ann Wright, and many, many more, especially the women, because they make up the majority of peacemakers and grassroots organizers. We also give thanks to the birds and the animals of this beautiful planet.

There are also other things that fly high above in the sky. These things include unmanned aerial vehicles and drones, killer drones.

These drones are being flown right now, controlled by people right in front of us, behind those wretched black gates. They search for people to kill 24/7, they are relentless, and they are secret. Flying in places such as Iraq, Iran, Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia, and probably many more places that are kept secret and hidden. However, we know the pilots are not secret or hidden. They shop in the same stores we do, right after bombing a wedding! We have heard from the victims, and we have heard from the pilots, and the facts are that both sides end up suffering, either from broken bodies, broken minds, or both.

The surrounding conflict has seeped into my dreams. Dreams have a prophetic tone to them. Martin Luther King’s dream struck a nerve with people, mainly African-Americans, at his famous

DC speech. You could call it prophetic dream witness.

I woke up at 5 a.m. on a rainy Tuesday morning in April, which is an hour to a couple hours early for my normal waking hour. My dream had a great impact on me. I think it was the cry of the masses, the cry of over two million people sitting in jail in the United States, the cry of the newborn infant and mother in a war-torn country such as Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, or Palestine, the list goes on.

As I was startled awake by the subconscious cry of the enslaved masses, the downtrodden, I had a flashback to another dream. In late 2016, I woke up with my eyes full of tears and a wail coming from deep inside; it was an all-out weeping moment. I don’t remember much of the dream. I remember all of the beaten and battered faces of women, children, and men. My mind at that time connected these faces to those of Syria, now an utterly devastated land, wrecked from all sides by Russia, the United States, Assad, the military industrial complex, opportunistic war lords, and false prophets, prophets of violence and doom.

The tears streaming down my face were a small price to pay for my inaction. I didn’t keep this dream to myself. I shared it with my faith community, Manhattan Mennonite Church. I read their faces upon my delivery. They knew the pain, the feeling of sand running through the creases of our fingers, justice does the same.

So here I am again, but different location, yet advancement is happening. I no longer follow the star of the liberals, I follow dreams. Dreams of a simplified people around the eradication of poverty, war, industrial agriculture, prisons, police, guns, landlords, nuclear weapons, and the need for unending “progress,” and let’s not forget the slow takeover of screens, Google, Facebook, and their ilk.

The woman in my rainy Tuesday dream was reaching out for help, her baby wasn’t crying, though he should have been, and there was also blood dripping down her thighs. We were outside a hospital, yet no one came out to rescue her. Meanwhile, a group of soldiers marched by, and not even a glance was made toward this unravelling situation. The new mother collapsed, and people came rushing from behind me to come to her aid. I was looking up, and then I awoke.

I give some thought to the dreams I have, but most of the time they pass by like windy Kansas clouds. This one hung over me like a sheet of storm clouds.

Our continued effort at the Des Moines Catholic Worker to serve those in need, coupled with a continued presence at the Iowa Air National Guard Drone Command Center helps to create “a society where it is easier to do good,” and also continue the deep calling of the most unheard suffering masses, to be a witness, a prophetic dream witness. So I stand here, after hearing the cries for help, and I am reminded about Jesus’ call for nonviolence and love for thy enemy.

Peter Maurin’s Easy Essay titled, “Big Shots and Little Shots,” helps me to remember the reason we promote and practice nonviolent tactics:

Big Shots and Little Shots

When the big shots
Become bigger shots
Then the little shots
Become littler shots.
And when the little shots

Become littler shots
Because the big shots

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War on Iran

by Patrick Stall

It is a testament to the chaotic character of our times and the imperialist nature of our country that for a second issue in a row, this paper is compelled to cover another potential United States military intervention abroad, this time in Iran. A series of aggressive United States escalations following the Trump administration's unilateral withdrawal from the Iran Nuclear Deal nearly culminated in an outright war with Iran. On June 20, the United States illegally flew a drone over Iranian airspace, which Iran shot down over international waters. A day later, Trump authorized an airstrike on Iranian targets that would have killed scores of people, but he relented minutes before the attack. In the space of a day, the world held its breath while a doddering old man, Trump, waffled on whether to launch the United States and Iran into a terminal spiral of military escalations. It is difficult to overstate how close we were to war in those two days: had the United States launched an airstrike, Iran would have almost certainly responded with a military response of its own that would have taken the lives of American soldiers, beginning a deadly game of tit-for-tat of which the inevitable outcome would have been a full-scale war.

Now, a few weeks later and with tensions high between the United States and Iran, though not to the point of military conflict, we have time to catch our breath and consider what war with Iran would look like. Here, much like in Venezuela, the Trump administration seems to have little stomach for a full-on ground invasion like that seen in Iraq or Afghanistan under Bush. Instead, if war does break out, we are more likely to see a rapid series of military escalations between our country and Iran that leads to large-scale fighting in the air and sea with a limited war on the ground, not just over Iran, but in the whole Persian Gulf.

Iran has spent the four decades since the 1979 revolution preparing for exactly this kind of war. There are a number of reasons to believe that any military conflict with Iran would not be a cakewalk for the United States. First, unlike Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003, Iran has an extremely technologically sophisticated military that includes a navy and robust air defense system. It could be weeks or months before the United States can control the skies over Iran, and it is highly likely that dozens of manned United States aircraft would be shot out of the sky in the process. Fighting in the gulf may not go any better. In a 2002 war games exercise which simulated an invasion of Iran, the "United States" forces failed to achieve their objectives and lost 10,000 soldiers, while the "Iranian" forces sank a "United States" aircraft carrier, resulting in the calling-off of the war games. Any direct conflict between the United States and Iran is likely to result in American casualty figures more comparable to Vietnam than to the War on Terror.

Not only does Iran have significant conventional military capabilities, but they also command a significant number of proxy forces across the Gulf. In Lebanon and Syria, Hezbollah and its allied militias, trained and funded by Iran, have extensive experience in fighting an asymmetric wars against Israel, as well as during the Syrian civil war. In Ye-

men, the Houthis have received significant funding and arms from Iran and have already demonstrated their ability to wage war against Saudi Arabia. Iran also has ties to armed groups in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, all of whom can be expected to launch attacks against the United States military and its allies in all of those countries. Additionally, an American attack on Iran, a majority-Shia Muslim country, has the potential to spark sectarian conflict in neighboring Iraq and Pakistan. Shia militias in both countries may take independent military action against United States forces there, as well as their own governments. In sum, any military conflict between the United States and Iran will not be contained to Iran, and the resulting body count across the Persian Gulf, as well as Israel and Syria, will likely be counted in the hundreds of thousands in the short-term, with massive regional destabilization in the long-term.

We've already seen how this could start: perhaps an Iranian jet flies too close to an American ship for the captain's comfort and is shot down, killing the pilot and leading to an Iranian retaliation. Maybe the Houthis sink an American ship ferrying supplies to Saudi Arabia for use in that country's war in Yemen, and the United States blames Iran for supplying them with the weapons used for the sinking. Even another Israeli incursion into Lebanon, where Iran-backed Hezbollah would be forced to fight back, could lead to a terminal spiral of escalations. The United States has an outsized presence in the Persian Gulf and has literally surrounded Iran with its own military bases, forcing Iran into a permanent defensive posture (one that any reasonable country would take). The United States, for its part, sees Iran as its only real rival for power in the region and has taken every imaginable step to mitigate its influence short of the use of actual military force.

Few American civilians are interested in a war with Iran, so how can we work to prevent one? In the immediate time frame, protesting, as the Des Moines Catholic Worker did on June 29th, has far more impact than sitting at home. In the medium term, relations with Iran are one of small number of foreign policy issues where having a Democrat in the White House may actually make a difference. Obama, after all, did negotiate an end to the sanctions in the Iran nuclear deal. That deal, though, was only necessary because of the sanctions the United States put on Iran for exploring a nuclear weapons program, a step Iran only took because it fears American military intervention. The United States, after all, implemented regime change in Afghanistan and Iraq, its two closest neighbors, and constantly meddles in the affairs of every single country in the Persian Gulf. The only way to permanently prevent destabilization in the Gulf, the only way to extricate the United States from tension with Iran and so many foreign conflicts, is to end its imperial status and dismantle the American military apparatus. As with so many other issues written about in this publication, this is something that can only be achieved by a powerful mass movement. Attend a protest or join a local left-wing group: if there isn't one around you, start one! Together, with time, with luck, and with intense struggle, we can see the American empire go way of the British empire, into the dustbin of history.

my time making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches or sorting donated clothing. The sandwiches were for the long bus and plane trips, while the clothing was for changing out of the only clothes they had.

What I did wasn't very glamorous or exciting when I first considered it. However, like many experiences, there is more than one layer to the experience. From a biblical point of view, it might be seen as feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. From another perspective it could be seen as accompanying the refugees on their journey to freedom and standing in solidarity with their human rights to

Note on Iran

from Julie Brown, *Christian Peacemaker Teams member in Iraqi Kurdistan and former Des Moines Catholic Worker*

Thank you for organizing these demonstrations! I can't tell you enough how we need the United States citizens to speak out right now! Our partners along the border are scared for their families, homes, and livelihoods as tensions rise between the United States and Iran at a deadly pace. They fear their villages will become a battleground, and I fear they are correct.

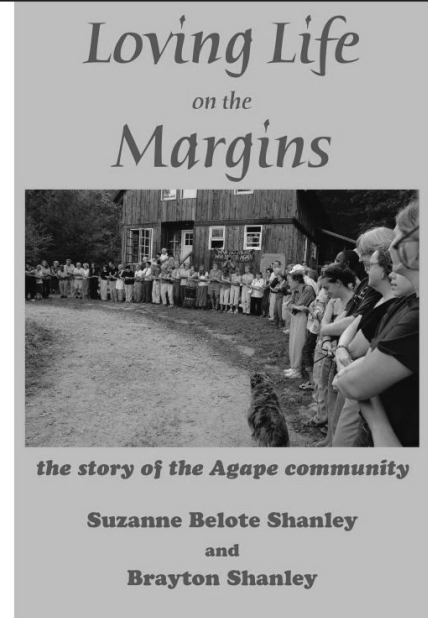
Iran is training its soldiers and positioning its forces for the day the United States launches its war, while the United States is sending more military personnel, and the President is instigating the situation at every turn. Escalations need to be halted now before it's too late.

As someone who lives within the Iraq/Iran "buffer zone," I would be lying if I said I wasn't also very concerned.

Last spring when I was in Baghdad, a man said something that was super impactful. I know it may seem simple but it held a lot of truth. This is the jist of his quote the best I can recall:

"The United States wants us to have a war with Iran. Iran is our neighbor. Why would we want to have a war with our neighbor? Iran will live next to us forever, but the United States is all the way across the world."

Peace be the Journey,
J.



Brayton Shanley and Suzanne Belote Shanley, co-founders of the Agape community released a new book this year, *Loving Life on the Margins: The Story of the Agape Community*. The book highlights their Catholic Worker connections since the 1970s. Brayton presents his inspiration towards a marginal life as starting with his Uncle Joseph McDonald, who started a Catholic Worker Farm in the 1930s in Pennsylvania and later was the chair of the philosophy department at St. Anselm College in New Hampshire, which hosted Dorothy Day several times. David O'Brien, Professor Emeritus of The College of the Holy Cross, wrote the forward to the book, which captures a 40-year history of life with the Atlantic Life Community, a friendship with Philip Berrigan, and campaigns against war and the death penalty, all in solidarity with the beloved Marginal Remnant, those worst-off in our society.

The Agape book may be ordered through the Agape website at www.agapecommunity.org. Also, watch for Michael Boover's review of the book to appear in the next issue of the New York Catholic Worker.

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to a way station for the refugees being dropped off by border patrol and ICE each day after they have processed them. It has room for 500 refugees to stay. There they are sheltered and fed while volunteers help them contact their sponsor and arrange transportation for them to get to their destination. Besides CDR, some of the refugees are dropped off at churches, community centers, and even motels. Ruben Garcia's mission is to be sure that no one spends the night on the streets of El Paso.

While at Casa del Refugiado, I spent most of

live safely and productively. It was also a chance to just be present with the immigrants and refugees in order to acknowledge them as human beings deserving respect, care, and love.

There is nothing heroic or special about any of this. It is carried on day after day at the border by ordinary people, as well as at Catholic Worker Houses in Des Moines and across the country. This is just what we are called to do. Serving the poorest of the poor is where we encounter our Christian vocation most directly as we "let our work be our prayer."

Reflections on Our Trip

by Susan van der Hijden

One fine day in May, I arrived at the Catholic Worker in Des Moines, and one of the first things I saw was a snake crawling through the cracks of the porch. We were definitely in a foreign country now! I have never seen a wild snake in my country. However, we soon saw the familiar face of Frank and were welcomed inside and felt at home.

I traveled all the way from the Netherlands with friends Chris from Germany and Ina from Austria to meet old friends, make new ones, and protest the military industrial complex along the way.

Chris and I have been part of Catholic Worker communities in Germany and the Netherlands for 25 years and had met Frank a few times on his travels through Europe. Ina joined a few European Catholic Worker gatherings and is making a documentary on (Christian) faith and resistance.

While protesting United States nuclear weapons based in Europe, we got an invitation to come to Kansas City to join civil disobedience actions at the so-called Nuclear Security Campus, where parts are made for the new nuclear B61-12 bombs that will replace the older bombs in our countries. Not just deadly when

used, hundreds of people have died or become sick building these bombs, and we don't even want them! It didn't take much pondering for us to raise some money, pack our bags, and fly



Susan speaking at the Third Annual Armed Forces Day Rally and Direct Action. Photo by Jade Suganuma

to the United States.

In Europe there are just ten Catholic Worker communities, but in the United States, there are over one hundred, and we wanted to

visit as many as we could squeeze into our short stay. Des Moines was high on our list!

Why did we feel at home in Des Moines? There were snakes, the food was different, the faces unfamiliar, the language hard to understand, and the water tasted weird. So why? Well, those unfamiliar faces belonged to kind people who became friends within five minutes. Some of the pictures on the walls depicting Dorothy Day or Oscar Romero were the same as back home. The food turned out to be really good. The snakes were harmless, even cute! More importantly, even though we sometimes couldn't follow the United States slang, we still spoke the same language when it came to how we see the world. In this sense, Christ comes to us through the people from the streets and not from church institutions. How love is the solution, and war and preparation for war is a sin. We joined the Catholic Worker, not so much to serve the poor, but to be saved by them. Living in community is both magical and horrible at the same time.

We felt blessed to have been able to stay with the Des Moines Catholic Worker for a few days, and we hope to come back some day. The water, however still tastes weird.

On Joining the Catholic Worker

by Oscar Buchanan

Hello, *via pacis* readers! My name is Oscar Buchanan, and I've spent the last month living the basement of Berrigan House and learning the ways of the Catholic Worker. I'm lucky to have the chance to introduce myself after having a little time to reflect and a lot of time to adapt. See, there are a lot of seeming incongruities between my background and this Christian anarchist movement: I'm not Catholic. I'm an atheist college student who puts my faith foremost in bureaucracy and public policy. As for the Catholic Worker as a movement, I have more trust that political organizing, rather than direct service work, will cause systemic social change. Despite these differences— which I hope to convince you are less opposed than they seem— I feel drawn to the Worker.

Part of this is because housing, homelessness, and community are buried near my heart. In the 90s, my middle class family moved into a poor, Latino neighborhood in Denver, with hopes of upward mobility. They were the pioneers of a wave of gentrification that my city is still reckoning with: Denver's teen homelessness, displacement of Latino communities, and lack of affordable housing is among the most extreme in the United States. However, because our society loves to support young white families, because my Mom was fortunate enough to have a career at a Fortune 50 company, and because of a little hard work, we could afford to stay in the neighborhood as it changed.

What this meant is that I grew up in a community that was crumbling. I remember having a new elementary school principal who insisted on "cleaning up" the school by getting rid of the teachers I loved. My younger siblings continually made friends with new kids on the block and then saw them move away. At some point, I stopped learning the names of my neighbors. Houses were put on sale, demolished, and replaced with tacky condos, and the neighborhood felt empty.

I spent much of my childhood feeling lonely and isolated, searching for the kind of community which our society forgets. I found traces of it among a community choir, and then a Denver activist group which fought for housing, affordable public transportation, and accountable policing. I then began my development as an activist, but something was still missing.

At Grinnell College I learned that what I missed was living together. I joined an activist group which had attempted to turn a residence hall into communal living to prevent its members from burning out. We wanted to fuel our activism with kindness and compassion, as well as anger and frustration. Alongside protests and tactical meetings, we had craft sessions and family meals. We went camping together, and we visited intentional communities around the state for ideas. On one of these trips, I



met the Des Moines Catholic Worker, and I was so taken by the experience that I led a second trip there the next year.

I remember the trip up to the Des Moines Catholic Worker in March: twelve Grinnell College students arrived at Dingman House's doorstep in the middle of Friday dinner. Without skipping a beat, the workers welcomed us, got our stuff stored away, and had us fill in where we were needed. It was a comfy chaos, like a family bustling around the kitchen as they prepared a Thanksgiving dinner. When we were asked to do something, it wasn't from a place of authority, but from a place of "this is what is happening right now." People filled in where they were needed; no bureaucracy, hardly any systems, just a group of people with the will to do the work.

This is how I now understand the anarchist lens of the Worker: it distrusts hierarchy and actively

mitigates any imbalanced power relations between worker and volunteer, worker and guest, worker and worker. Rules only exist when they are needed, guidelines are impermanent, and the most remarkable thing about it is that it works. Workers are generally present and aware that each moment, each interaction with another person, is unique. The process humanizes the homeless and other people in need in a way bureaucracy couldn't, and that service to them is worth a lot in a system that attempts to sweep the poor out of sight and out of mind. The Worker's brand of personalist anarchism is an effective policy, and that is something a bureaucratic wonk like myself can appreciate.

On the trip, after dinner, we participated in a Catholic mass. In line with anarchism, there was no priest, just someone who volunteered to lead each week. I was new to the liturgy, as were many people in the group. The mass reminded me of something my father had told me often, defending his own rejection of religion: "You don't need a church to practice the message of Christ." This is a belief I hold dearly—that one can be moral, and do good, without the guidance of God—a belief that is allowed to flourish at the Worker. We "let our work be our prayer," that is, our service to God is simply our good service.

One last thought on the movement: A worker told me, "we let the guest do the proselytizing." Protest is not part of our service, but there is a consensus that if I a worker can live here without concluding that serious structural change is necessary, then we aren't doing our job. Despite years of activism, I think here more than anywhere is where I have the best chance to shake the deep and difficult stigmas about poverty, race, and creed, and that's because of the guests and the work.

I still refuse to call myself a Christian anarchist, but I will call myself a Catholic Worker. It's a peculiarity of the Worker, but it's also part of its power as a movement. If all I had ever seen was the pamphlet or *via pacis*, I would never have chosen to spend my summer here. Now I'm struggling with wanting to stay here longer. The Worker is different in person, and it seems to me like that's the point.

The Eight Limbs of Yoga

by Ryna-Ria Ignacio

Yoga has been defined as the union, healing and purification of the body, mind, and spirit, bringing balance and harmony into one’s life. With more balance and harmony, we are able to direct our focus into thoughts and actions of higher consciousness. Thinking and acting with higher consciousness is guided by divine love and is in accordance with the supreme Lord’s guidance. Thinking and acting with a higher consciousness makes it easier to connect with those around us in a healthier way. The ultimate goal, according to most sacred Vedic texts, is to become a self-realized soul through the practice of yoga and remember our true spiritual nature of eternally loving and serving God. I am far from becoming a self-realized soul, but the journey has been so fulfilling and my love for God and all that surrounds me grows more each and every day on this path.

There are many ways and branches of practicing yoga. According to the *Bhagavad-Gita*, there are three fundamental practices which are karma-yoga (the yoga of action), jnana-yoga (pronounced “*gyana*,” the yoga of self-study), and bhakti-yoga (the yoga of devotion).

Personally, I am working towards the practice of bhakti yoga, which also carries karma-yoga and jnana-yoga within it. These practices guide me to engage all of my senses in the service of the Lord. Four teachers that I have found highly influential on my journey have been His Divine Grace A.C Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada, who teaches how to love and serve the Lord through bhakti-yoga, Patanjali who wrote the Yoga Sutras, Sri K. Pattabhi Jois, who created a sequence of body postures, or asanas, named Ashtanga Vinyasa, and Christince, who awakened and expanded my consciousness through this practice of Ashtanga Vinyasa.

Ashtanga is Sanskrit for *eight-limbed path of yoga*. Here is the first limb of yoga: **Yamas**, meaning *abstentions or universal moralities*. The **yamas** are **Ahimsa** (*non-violence*), **Satya** (*truthfulness*), **Asteya** (*refrainment from stealing*), **Brahmacharya** (*celibacy*), and **Aparigraha** (*non-attachment; renunciation of [unnecessary] possessions*).

The practice of **ahimsa** is to be nonviolent in thought, word, and deed. It has been written in the yoga sutras by Patanjali that, “Any involvement in violent acts of any kind requires that the perpetrator be subjected to the same violence at some future time, as karmic consequence. Moreover, inflicting violence is a quality of *tamas* [nature of ignorance

and delusion], and thus eating meat increases the tamastic potential of the *citta* [consciousness], further enhancing ignorance.” Within this material world, it is difficult to avoid violent actions. We kill bacteria when we shower, we step on small insects when we walk, harm plants when we clear out “invasive” plants from gardens, and on and on. I still try, to the best of my ability, to create the least harm to those around me through all that I do by being more thoughtful of what I eat, the words I choose to speak, the things I buy (and the origin of those things), and even what I choose to read or study.

I truly believe that the main root of violence within ourselves begins with our diet, which affects our thoughts and soon after, our actions. By eating something that had to be killed, that is evidently sentient and can smile back at you, creates violent tendencies and great suffering within the body by causing diseases. Yes, vegetables and fruits have consciousness also, but they are grown to nourish the body and allow us to be healthy enough to continue to healthily serve one another.

Sadhu Vaswani, a yogi from the early twentieth century, states, “All killing is a denial of love, for to kill or eat what another has killed, is to rejoice in cruelty, and cruelty hardens our hearts and blinds our vision, and we see not that they whom we kill are our brothers and sisters in the One Brotherhood of Life.” Through this practice, we could cultivate a deeper sense of compassion towards one another.

Satya is being true to ourselves and those around us. Vyasa, the writer of the Vedas defines truth as, “one’s words and thoughts being in exact correspondence to face, that is, to whatever is known through the process of [sense perception, inference, and verbal testimony]. A pure, genuine spiritual life cannot truly begin without truthfulness. A healthier heart ...healthier relationships come from those who are trustworthy and those who are trustworthy speak and act truthfully.” Vyasa, also states,”Speech is for the transferal of one’s knowledge to others and should not be deceitful, misleading, or devoid of value. It should be beneficial for all creatures.”

Asteya is non-stealing of not just material items, but also of someone’s time and energy. Rather than taking from others, we should be more giving. Healthier relationships or friendships happen when we give our presence and awareness with those in front of us by fully listening to what they have to share without assumptions or interruptions. Give love and respect without expectations. Another

way to practice *asteya* is by giving back to the earth through gardening and using natural sustainable products that are not created through the exploitation of others and the earth. It’s time to give back and nourish the needs of the earth and Her inhabitants, the needs of our brothers and sisters. Let’s practice becoming producers rather than consumers!

Brahmacharya is to act in ways that will bring us to spiritual unity. To live in celibacy includes regulating sexual energy and transforming it into an aid towards enlightenment. Becoming celibate can help advance one’s devotion towards the Lord quickly since there are less distractions, but with regulation, anyone is able to reach a higher consciousness.

Aparigraha is non-attachment. We must learn to detach and let go of control and surrender into the moment, to surrender unto God’s divine plan for us, to surrender unto the knowledge that good things will happen whether we plan it out or not. Everything we need is already provided for us. We must let go of the idea that we own things. All things in this material world are temporary. Krishna says in the *Bhagavad-Gita* (2.71), “A person who has given up cravings and all sense of proprietorship, who is devoid of false ego-- he alone attains peace.” People are working so hard for money to protect their homes, their families, and their things. This brings attitudes of greed, anger, stress, and anxiety.

We can be at peace within ourselves if we awaken to the idea that things need to flow and come and go and that God owns everything.

We have made things much more complicated and difficult than it has to be. All God asks for is to love and serve Him and love and serve our brothers and sisters with all of our hearts. With our love, expressions of gratitude, and divine guidance, God provides us all with food, water, clothing, and shelter quite easily when asked for sincerely. We can all live simply and create more space to focus on higher thinking. We can make space for spiritual growth when we let go of our focus on having the most of the best of material things.

This is the first limb of yoga which includes five yamas. I hope you find some value in my thoughts on them and are able to add a few things into your personal spiritual practices! Next limb I will talk about is the Niyamas!

My Mother Drank to Forget Loneliness

A Poem by Arnal Kennedy, Los Angeles Catholic Worker

My Mother drank to forget loneliness
My Father passed of heart failure when
I was eleven years old I have three older
Siblings the two boys are married and have
Yet to give a grandchild, sometimes I think
My Mother drank to endure to forget my Father
Whom she said was the nicest man those evenings
She read in bed by the lamp light in solitude
By the warmth of the heater, to raise four children
Without much help, even though, we had Grand
Parents she still most sift the soot at home and
Is the sole bread winner, and she never remarried
When asked she would say that’s not what I’m
Looking for in a man, I’ll keep you abreast,

My Mother and Father were a product of the Hippie
Movement in the sixties, peace, love, sexual freedom,

No more war, and more drugs to cope with this filthy
Rotten system our parents left us, honor and nobility
Were talked about around the dinner table yet most
Hippies felt their parents were out of touch or plain
Hypocrites going to church in a suit and tie, in 1963
My Mother was a bobby socker yelling for the Beatles
At their American debut at Shea Stadium prim and prissy
Pregnant but not showing, by 1968 she was sitting on my
Father’s shoulders with no bra in the pouring rain screaming
Her lungs out at Woodstock my oldest brother was five years old
And he felt orphaned by all the people they left him with,
My Mother said the Hippie Movement gave
Awareness Vietnam was beginning, racism, sexism,
Hypocrisy of the parental class and money is the answer,
America clamored for more spiritual growth, also no more
Bad male sex partners with an ego asking how was it, for you
And the usual answer where you feign satisfaction.



Lynn and Eddie match for the day!



June 29th was hot, but standing up to warmongers and facists is our call.



Several of our guests sitting outside enjoying a nice summer afternoon before the intense summer heat approaches.



Volunteers from Our Lady of Immaculate Conception in Ankeny, IA help paint new wooden picnic tables for our outside seating area!



We said goodbye to Phil the cat in June; Phil was a loveable creature.



Jaeyna joined the community in the beginning of May.



Al (pictured) and Celestino successfully built a cardboard containment area. The city targeted this area out of many other visble violations in the neighborhood. Gentrification is a reality in River Bend neighborhood.



Students from Grinnell College joined Des Moines Catholic Worker for our weekly food giveaway at Trinity Las Americas United Methodist Church.



Des Moines Catholic Worker community dinner to celebrate the arrival of our summer volunteer, Oscar!



Sultan green beans and purple green beans in the Catholic Worker community garden.



San Marzano tomatoes on the verge of ripening in the Catholic Worker community garden.

50 Years Ago...

by Frank Cordaro

A couple of months ago, my brother Joe discovered a number of boxes of our mother's old stuff under their basement staircase closet. All of our family members were welcome to look through and claim the contents of the boxes. Among the items I chose was a May 14, 1969 issue of *The Aquin*, the student paper for Dowling High School (DHS). DHS was the all-boys Catholic high school where my father taught and coached. It also happens to be the school that all of my brothers and I graduated from.

The spring of 1969 was my senior year. The front page headline of the newspaper read, "Cordaro Death Stuns Dowling: Rites Attended by Thousands," accompanied by a large photo of my dad at his classroom desk. There were anecdotes and stories about my father throughout the issue, all of them true! My father was an amazing human being.

Reading this issue of *The Aquin* brought back a lot of deep memories and heartfelt emotions that were formational for the person I have become; a lifelong Catholic Worker and resistor to the United States Empire. At first glance, it's hard to see any connection between "me" in 1969 and "me" today. In 1969, I was on an entirely different life path than the one I ended up embracing.

The following text is from a personal description I sent to the Dowling Athletic Hall of Fame Selection Committee before being inducted into DHS Athletic Hall of Fame on Sept 16, 2016:

Frank Cordaro, DHS Class of 1969. Sports played and lettered: football, wrestling, track, and baseball. On the first two undefeated DHS football teams, 1967 and 1968, beginning the longest undefeated string of wins in school history. Captain of football team.

In addition to being captain of the football team, also qualified for the First Team All City Football and 4th Team All State Football Team, and I was elected to class offices all four years of high school, holding both vice president and president offices. I also served on a city-wide student council.

In that note, I also mentioned I received the Aquinas Keys, the highest honor a senior can receive. It was always based on academic excellence and typically given to the "smart guys" in our class. I got the award that year, not for my grades, which were barely passing (just enough to get me into college on a football scholarship!), but for my work with the student council, a totally new category that was totally bogus!

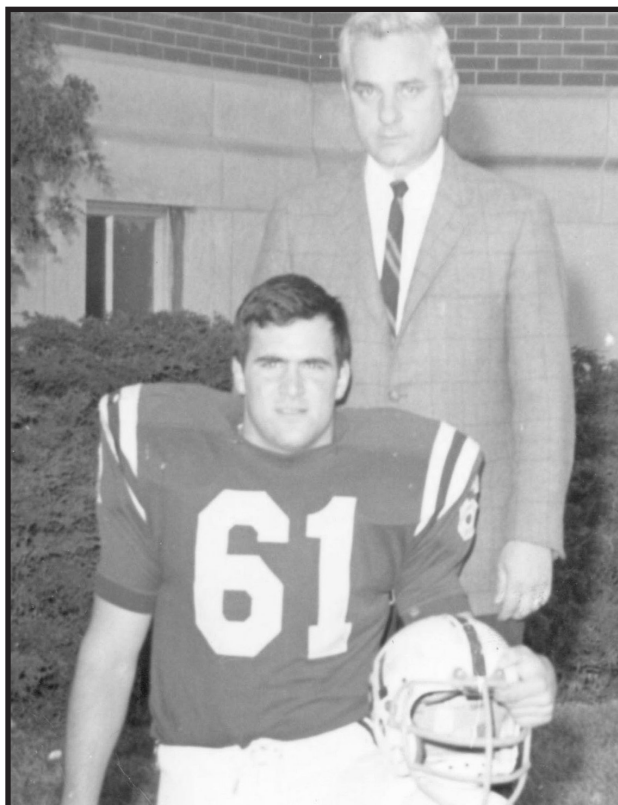
The back story of my Aquinas Key Award came back to me on page five of *The Aquin*, the opinion page.

Five of the smartest guys in my class were denied their rightfully earned Aquinas Keys that year because they published an alternative newsletter called the "Sober Eye." In it, they wrote anti-Vietnam

War articles and advocated that Dowling High School remain where it was located in a poor neighborhood on the near-north side of Des Moines, as a sign of solidarity with one of the poorest and most racially charged neighborhoods in the city, instead of moving to the wealthy west side, where it now resides.

News of their "underground newspaper" went viral. In those days, that meant the local conservative WHO radio guy, Russ LaVine, got a hold of the story and rang the radio alarm about "commies at DHS"! All hell broke loose on campus.

To my great regret, I was one of the leading voices distancing the good name of DHS from these very unpatriotic classmates, and I tried to run them off campus, literally! The first demonstration I ever



George Cordaro (standing) and Frank Cordaro (kneeling). George was Dowling High School Athletic Director - himself a DHS Athletic Hall of Famer. Photo taken in the Fall of 1968. George Cordaro, Frank's dad, died the following spring, Easter Sunday morning April 6, 1969.

organized and lead was a pro-United States, pro-DHS rally on campus! As I remember it, we really did not physically kick these guys off campus. However, at graduation, they did not receive their Aquinas Keys, and I received a surprise Aquinas Key for student council.

On the opinion page, the smart guys on our side wrote columns tearing down the "Sober Eye" editors and included a petition signed by over half of the senior class, my name included, disassociat-

ing ourselves for the "Sober Eye 5" and reaffirming our faith-filled allegiance to "American values" and Catholic education.

Ironies abound! It is not lost on me that the Catholic Worker community I founded in 1976 is in the same neighborhood as the old Dowling. We serve the very people I was afraid of in the 1960s. Plus, I would have been voted the least-likely guy in my class to turn into a lifelong, anti-American, long hair, pony tail, hippie and jailbird peace activist.

The thread that connects my current life as an activist to my unlikely beginning is the deep influence of my father. He lived a life of service as a teacher and coach. He was a true believer in his god, family, church, and country. A WWII vet who was awarded a Purple Heart, my dad came back from war to become a teacher and coach in order to serve and give back to his community. Teaching at DHS was a dream come true to him. Coaching baseball became a means to an end for my dad to serve his god, family, church and country whole-heartedly, and he taught us all to do the same.

Looking back now at the 1950s and 60s, I was raised in a time even more sexist, racist, and homophobic than today. Growing up, I was mostly unaware of these larger real world issues. I gave my day-to-day allegiance to the same mission and purpose that my father lived every day of his life; at home, in our neighborhood, with its extended Italian family and friends, at DHS, and in the larger city of Des Moines, especially in the world of high school sports.

My father's early death prevented him from helping lift the veil of empire from my eyes, but in his life, he showed me how to play the game of life: how to be a true believer in God, family, church and country. My father taught me how to be the best human being I could be. As a result, when I found the radical Jesus in college, I already had the tools I needed to follow him, because my dad showed me how.

When I received the DHS Athletic Award in 2016, I ended my remarks with, "I'm still a True Believer, like my Dad, only I have a different understanding of God, Family, Church and Country than I had 50 years ago. But like my dad, I try to teach and coach by example." But rather than harness those values of family, hard work, forging connections and employing passion towards a traditional Catholic and American end, I use the lessons that my father taught me to resist the excesses of that church and my country. For my ability to do so, I owe my father a debt I can never repay.

WHITSON cont'd from p. 3

Become bigger shots
Then the Little shots
Get mad at the big shots.

And when the little shots
Get mad at the big shots
Because the big shots
By becoming bigger shots
Make the little shots
Littler shots
They shoot the big shots
Full of little shots.

But by shooting the big shots
Full of little shots
The little shots
Do not become big shots
They make everything shot.

I am going to try and enter the base today, to try and stop those inside from committing these horrendous acts of violence, secret violence. They

won't let me in by the door, so I have to use other means.

Think of a burning building, children inside, children being killed from inside. Stopping the killing is of utmost importance, it is needed!

On my back I have the Lovarchy symbol, a symbol for peace and unity, ruled by no one.

As we attempt to stop those hateful acts, I think of our Creator who showed the most love for us. I must act on my conscience. I call on all to join me, to join this cause to save our planet from the number one polluter, to rebel against extinction!

May the peace of the universe be with you.
May Krsna be with you! May God be with you! Hare Krsna! Shalom! I love you all!

Pictured Right:

Jakob Whitson is carrying the ladder used to climb up the gate. The symbol on the back of his jumpsuit is the lovarchy symbol.



Transgender Voices

Transgender Voices is a new section in *via pacis*. The voices of transgender people, for so long squelched, even amidst the rapid normalization of other LGBTQ voices in the United States, will be embodied here. Art, poetry, and prose will be its messenger.

In this issue, transitions will be the focus. For transgender people, coming into themselves brings new hope, but also certain loss. Regardless of the age when transgender people turn towards their true selves, it is a period marked with hope and heartbreak. Even as they turn towards their future, letting go of what was and what was hoped for brings pain; that pain is sometimes shared with friends, family members, and partners who struggle themselves with the transition. “The Last Days” captures just that, as “Shadow” re-orient us towards the future.

The Last Days

By Bailey Guthrie
Pronouns: He/Him

panic was patient
as we carefully carried our
bleeding hearts
and stepped together

in a nightmare
we wouldn't leave together
we laid on our backs
screaming
tangled in sheets and sadness

i lie on my back
screaming
tangled in sheets of sadness

no one can hear
my heart breaking
or the sudden shock
sharp spasm
cramping of my soul

soft places
helpless spaces
broken faces
so i leave my thoughts
and watch my hands peel skin
from these muscles
which have given me so much strength.

Bailey Guthrie is first and foremost a registrar of ideas by any means necessary. Bailey's favorite mediums include watercolor, creative writing, photography, and music.

Shadow

By Madeleine Terry
Pronouns: She/Her

Walking the well-worn path
I approached the door to my office

With the morning sun rising at my back
she greeted me

An elongated figure stretched before me
shaped like a girl I knew long ago

She was grown now, but still recognizable

We were childhood friends separated early
whose bonds could not be severed

Her outline matched my face
through which we both peered at the world

I giggled that way girls are allowed
even as women, when reunited after years

Two women dissolving in their own girlishness
one again for good

As a trans woman, Madeleine's experience walking both sides of the tracks reveals itself from her various roles, including the one she cherishes the most – as a mom to her non-binary teenager. Exploring subjects such as spirituality, privilege, and vulnerability, she writes in the intersection between poetry and prose where economy and form open a space without having to fill it.

Third Annual “Bishop Pates Please Teach, Test, and Grade the Des Moines Drone Command Center”

Where: St Ambrose Cathedral, 607 High Street, downtown Des Moines
When: 24/7 Vigil - Tuesday August 6, 8am to Friday August 9th, 8am
Regroup for a same day rally and direct action at Drone Command, 3100 McKinley Ave. at 11am

*** Des Moines Catholic Workers and Veterans for Peace “Bill Bassinger” Chapter 163 will be present. All are welcome to join us for conversation and a cool drink outside the cathedral. Come learn about “End Drone Warfare Presidential Candidate Pledge Campaign.”

Remembering Hiroshima-Nagasaki: Choosing a Future of Peace

Friday, August 9, 7:00 p.m. at
the Japanese Bell,
south of the State Capitol
(parking is in the
Supreme Court Building lot)

For more info: Catholic Peace Ministry
515-803-1152
catholicpeaceministry@gmail.com

The Cat

by a Friend of the Des Moines Catholic Worker

I really disliked that cat, that feline that was mostly white with patches of black; the cat named CAT shortly after she came into our family of four adopted dogs that my wife somehow encountered. One of the dogs, an Italian poodle, has symptoms of epilepsy, and it was tortured by local children. Another, a rat terrier, was one of a pair, but she was black in color while her sister was white. The pair looked like an advertisement for scotch. The parents bought the pair for their child, who mistreated the black one because of its color. The large pyrenees grew too large for her Canadian owner. The last dog was from the same owner as the cat.

Emilio* was from El Paso, Texas. He built choppers for a living, mostly from old Hondas he rescued. He converted to Islam late in life, but was, as most converts I've met are, very religious. In the Islamophobia after 9/11, he was held incommunicado by the police for several months, apparently for questioning. On his release, Emilio worked voluntarily for his mosque, traveling all over the southwest, locating other members of his mosque held in detention centers and helping them in their eventual release. For his efforts, he was held in detention for further questioning for weeks at a time. After months of that treatment, he decided to move to Mexico to forego any further jail time.

CAT was collected some three years back when she took up residence in my shop, which is also a basement. She proved to be a great mouser, so we fed her. The only problem was that she ran away and hid every time my wife or our hired man came near. If I fed her, she would come to be caressed and petted, and if I failed to pet the cat, she would howl, sometimes for as long as ten minutes, even jumping up on the basement door. That cat was in love with only me...and I dislike cats. If I would sit on the stairs with her on my lap she would quiet down after a few minutes of stroking, but then I had to suffer the wrath of my wife, who is allergic to cat hair.

When Emilio moved to Mexico he kept in contact via computer with his son and his father. He set up a small business of selling crafts from local women in a cooperative near us. The money he made was deposited in a Paypal account from which he could withdraw as needed. When he moved to my town, he searched for some land outside of town where he could practice his religion and have some solitude.

CAT did not venture from her basement space, occasionally ambling for the exterior door when it was opened. She would stare out the door for a few minutes, then walk to a safe place among the stacks of wood or under one

of the benches. On occasion, the smaller dogs would come to the door and bark at the cat, but they were barred from entering the shop. Whenever any other human entered the shop, the cat would scramble to hide.

Emilio needed help building his home after he had found some land, loaned to him by a Dutchman who grew flowers in an area of some acres. The flowers were grown in greenhouses, but there was no one living on the land to guard the buildings. The Dutchman bought the materials. I encountered Emilio when he came to me for advice in building. I helped him to build in his fenced area, and eventually we installed a solar-powered water heater and an inverter with other panels for his solar-powered electrical system. He began to grow his vegetables, continued with his business, and prayed his required prayers each day. He also started collecting stray and abandoned animals.



When my wife and I started driving north for a recent trip to the United States, my wife's parents came to stay in the house. They are old and don't often get a chance to travel outside of their small town. While we were in the United States, her parents fed the animals and relaxed. Two weeks into our trip, the cat decided to leave her subterranean room for the outdoors. She escaped and ran from the dogs to neighbor's land.

Emilio ended up collecting, feeding, and caring for six cats, sixteen dogs, and four horses. The horses had been hit by cars, so he nursed them back to health with the aid of a generous veterinarian. Some of the dogs had been injured as well. He healed them all. Some of the animals were pregnant, so he cared for the younger animals too. With the help of his veterinarian friend, he had all the smaller animals neutered. The horses were the exception. He subsequently had two colts for his menagerie.

hours of today. I awoke to a cacophony of barking. Three of the four dogs had something trapped under an outside sink. I pulled two of the dogs away and reached for the cat, who had returned. It was a bad mistake on my part. The cat scratched and bit my hand, then fled when I dropped her. She went to hide under my truck, where two of the dogs dragged her out and killed her.

A visiting immigration agent of Mexico, friendly with Emilio, came by his land to tell him that Homeland Security had been inquiring about his presence in Mexico. The agent told Emilio that in a few days, they would have to come back and take him into custody. Around the same time frame, Emilio received a notice to appear at the United States Embassy in Mexico City because his passport was invalid, hence he was in Mexico illegally. He asked me to help him flee, further declaring, "I just can't go back to jail again." I gathered money from local friends from the United States who also knew Emilio. I did as much as I could to help him flee from persecution once again.

I promised Emilio I would try to place his animals in good homes. I spent five days returning to the homestead to move most of the dogs. One street dog, only a couple of months old, came to our place. It was the same dog that led the killing of the cat. The horses were adopted by the Dutchman. On the fifth day, our hired worker captured our cat, who had returned for the food we put out each day. The other cats and kittens ran away into the nearby forest.

For the following month, we disassembled the house and cleaned up the site, continuing to put out food in hopes of collecting other cats. No other cats returned. All while we disassembled the house, I wondered about Emilio. I wondered why the government continued to harass him six years after the 9/11 attack. In our talks, he told me that his Imam had been deported back to Egypt, and members of his mosque had moved to various parts of the country after their detention, while some had fled the country. All of this trauma, for their religion.

While I do not regret helping my friend, I really disliked that cat. For the last two years, I had to listen to its howling and spend time with the animal, but each time I sat on the stairs and caressed that cat, I wondered if Emilio had escaped. Where is he now? All I can do is hope that he has been able to begin a new life where he continues to rescue animals.

**name changed for confidentiality, cat changed for confidentiality.*

As I write this, I can recall the early

Norman's Whereabouts

by Norman Searah

Hello there! It's April 28th, 2019, I am next to the kitchen at another table, writing my article on a partial sunshine and cloudy day with a couple showers tonight. But it's raining in New England a lot, or snowing.

I read about a man named Danny Manchester, named after the city in New England I was born in. I know in the past, it got flooded or just the Merrimack River.

I'm sorry for all the families who have lost homes, farms, and land... businesses, schools, churches and maybe more. I hope they can repair the levees in their homes and towns no matter where. With prayers in my heart I think of a town that had tornadoes, Marshalltown, Iowa.

I'm sorry for the south and all of the tornadoes and wherever the hurricanes strike.

I know that when I was young, I stayed back in school a lot and ran away. I found myself confessing to a lot of church people that I ran away from home because I failed from school, not church in towns, and recall all those church for mass and sitting with them after mass, eating, I found it good.

The weather was good and friendly no matter what part of the country I was in.

I didn't hide or seek shelter from the weather if it was bad. I slept outside away from the road.

I kept to towns and feel sorry now for all the flooding in and around Iowa and about the tornado in Marshalltown.

I wish I knew more about the rest of the country, even New England where I am from and have brothers and sisters.

It seems this Spring they must have had a lot of snow and rain. Some of the rivers might have gotten flooded in New England even the Charles river; where some colleges have races, or should I say, boat races. They even have college boat races on a river in Philadelphia like they might do in Iowa City. I wonder if the river is still flooded.

I look at the last couple of years, the weather gotten bad, so bad it's even part of our Spring. If you look at it, May in some parts or ask.

I'm even sorry if New Orleans and any other southern city got flooded, even Florida and East Coastal place. I don't know about the Ohio river.

Thinking of floods, I have a lot of religious DVDs or, if you may, movies. One of them is Noah's Ark Revealed. It's a documentary and somewhat a movie too. In two different movies, Moses is talking to a burning bush that calls him to guide the Israelites out of bondage. The reluctant leader and his flock begin the treacherous journey to the promised land. I hope it is like that in the Bible.

In the second movie, Noah meets God as a burning bush. God talked to Noah personally before the Ark was even built. God told Noah that he saw a lot of wickedness, killing of man, too much violence on Earth and he was going to flood the Earth. He wanted Noah and his family of eight people, to build a large Ark on a mountain with a lot of trees on it to make the Ark. An ark not only for his



Norman protesting outside the Drone Command Center family but for all the animals, two of each kind. So Noah and his family built the ark with rooms and stalls for the animals to stay. The rain came and started to flood around the ark, I guess some people came but it was too late to get in.

But as Noah and his family worked on the ark, people came and made jokes, maybe even laughed at them, maybe they didn't understand. They prayed a lot together, even under the open tent while working on the ark and when it was done and full with the animals and food.

It floated away from where they were and landed on mountain Ararat where there were no trees. I wondered how long they had to live in the ark on Mt. Ararat until they had to let the animals go. Where did Noah and his family move to down the mountain somewhere together. How many grandchildren did Noah have to create a village or a town a beginning of Turkey.

I am sorry for all the people that go to Mt. Ararat to look for Noah's ark, maybe to end all the wickedness in the world. The killing in the world and other things like war. God is love and peace.

I feel sorry for all the people that get killed just for going to church to pray to their Lord; being with others and not hurting others.

Maybe like yourself a student learn in school with others and being taught by a teacher.

Find you and others are being killed and others may be killed in another room, In time, others are asked themselves why as they recall you and others. Even those that are killed in church of any faith and maybe praying to God, maybe anywhere in this world.

I ask myself why.. Why even a homeless person and others by themselves, God created us, there is something we can change, to change that bothers us all not just one or a few, a lot.

I'm looking at Al Gore standing in front of Hurricane Katrina dated August 29, 2005.

Have we seen what a lot of lateis storm did to some island states or countries and told how many have died. We need to stop the killing with guns.

And if we can stop wars, then we can deal with the earth's environment with global warming. We should think of a better and cleaner future. I see a lot of building, a lot of new buildings and burning more coal and destroying more by sending our coal smoke up to the atmosphere. Something about a greenhouse effect.

The name of the DVD is An Inconvenient Truth: A Global Warming. He starts his talk about when they took some pictures of earth when they went out into space on December 25, 1968.

I have an earth flag to remind me this is for all of the United States.

We need to end our wars and our problems with our weather. We may see more lands flooded. Davenport has problems with the Mississippi river.

But after a trip to Chicago to see tent city near a highway, on the other side of the University of Illinois and not too far from the Chicago bus station. Where I stayed overnight to watch the people get a ride back to

Des Moines, Iowa. I got to see both sides of the road and how people are doing.

It seems the weather was sunny and warm in all the bus stops along the way since it was a weekend. It looked like most rivers from Des Moines weren't flooded even though there was a lot of farm fields that had a lot of sitting water.

There was a lot of sitting water in forests and lakes but it wasn't until we got to Davenport with houses near lowland not far from the city house had water problems. And sitting in farm fields in Iowa along the way to Chicago but only in forests that were low and could hold a lot of water.

It's May 8th, I read the paper, the weather page, it's raining outside for most of the day.

There's a chance for local flooding. Flood watches have been posted.

For the Raccoon and the Des Moines river basins. Rain will be heavy at periods. Davenport's major baseball field is really close to the Mississippi river and is surrounded by water from the river that you can't enter.

When I was on the bus, I looked down at the field and they were watering the grass.

I was looking at the Iowa Cubs Baseball field close to the Des Moines river.

I like going by it and looking at a part of Des Moines's past history before the ball park.

I'm speaking of the log cabin. It reminds me of the old army fort in Fort Madison when i used to take family members that were in prison in Fort Madison.

STALL cont'd from p. 1

tions. It should be noted that this is not the first time the United States has run concentration camps: reservations for Native Americans, Japanese internment camps, and the current, sprawling prison system are just a few of the ways our country has confined and abused suspect populations. However, we should take exception at this iteration of American cruelty, at this moment, especially. If the abuse of children on a mass scale, for no reason but their country of origin, can be tolerated now, we should expect far more dystopian conditions of confinement and death in the decades to come, as it is inevitable that millions of climate refugees will attempt to enter our country in the near future. A few dozen children have died in the camps at this point, but we can be sure that the number will only continue to rise as overcrowding and disease spread. At what point does a concentration camp become a death camp? It may not be long until we are forced to consider the question in macabe, concrete terms.

Further, there are no solutions to this crisis within conventional political struggle. The immigrant detention facilities which the Trump administration fills with children were built by Obama. Even

if a democrat wins the presidency in 2020, there is scarce hope that the new president will do more than improve conditions slightly in the immediate term. The legal structure of the United States immigration system functions so that as more refugees come in, sponsors for the refugees (whose existence allows refugees to wait for their cases to be processed outside of detention facilities) will become fewer and further between and less and less able to accommodate new cases, leaving more and more people in the camps. The fact is, these camps are built into the imperialist system of the United States: they are a part of our government's racist DNA, and no politician elected in that system is going to change that. Have we already forgotten Obama's failed promise to close Guantanamo Bay after being elected? There is no way to vote these camps out of existence.

What is required to close the camps is the same thing that shut down Trump's ban on travelers from Muslim countries and the government shutdown. It is the same thing that ended Pinochet's dictatorship, as well asand desegregated schools.: We need mass movements of people organized by left-wing organizations. If you haven't already, get

involved in your local socialist or anarchist group. The Democratic Socialists of America, Party for Socialism and Liberation, and the Industrial Workers of the World are good places to start. All are actively protesting the camps and have been in the vanguard of those fighting Trump's worst impulses, with the ultimate goal of rebuilding the country in a more egalitarian, democratic, and less cruel image.

Until we get there, attend marches and demonstrations against these camps. Accost ICE agents in the streets if they come to your neighborhood. Spill your drinks on their vehicles. Hide undocumented people in your home if they need sanctuary. Lie to and misdirect the police and ICE. If you're married to an ICE or CPD agent, divorce them. If you're friends with one, tell them they are a Nazi. If you know where one lives, let local activists know where, and let them deal with that information in whichever way they choose. We don't live in a country where the laws render justice. We live in a country where they are incapable of doing so. If you're not going to start resisting in a meaningful way now, then when? If not here, then where?

Des Moines Catholic Worker
via ***pacis***
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HOW YOU CAN HELP

VOLUNTEERS:
Individuals and work crews for hospitality (serving food, cleanup), cleaning and general inside and outside maintenance . . . without them, we burn out.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE:
Feminine Hygiene Items, Diapers, Baby Formula, Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Multivitamins, Antibiotic Ointment, Band-Aids, Lip balm

TOILETRIES:
Disposable Razors, Shaving Cream, Shampoo, Conditioner, Lotion, Deodorant, Soap, Toothpaste. (Small sizes preferred for handout. . .) Toothbrushes and Toilet Paper.

FOOD:
Fruit, Vegetables, Milk, Cheese, Butter, Olive or Vegetable Oil, Sugar, Coffee, Creamer, Salt, Black Pepper, Fresh Garlic. Leftovers from weddings, funerals and other social gatherings. . .

NEEDED CLOTHING:
Underwear, Socks, T-shirts, Sweatshirts, Work Pants. (All Sizes—especially big. . .) Sleeping Bags, Blankets

MEAL PROVIDERS:
ritic, Salad dressing, Soups and St Provide a meal for 50-70 people once a month! Call or email for current openings. 515-214-1030, dmcatholic-worker@gmail.com

HOUSEHOLD SUPPLIES:
Bleach, Laundry Detergent,

Environmentally-Friendly Dish Soap, Murphy's Oil Soap, Pine-sol, Trash Bags, Brooms, Rugs, Candles, Energy-Efficient Light Bulbs, Aluminum Foil, Plastic Wrap, Sandwich and Freezer Bags, Bath Towels, Playing Cards, Candles, phone chargers

HOUSE REPAIRS:
With four old houses, there are plenty of projects large and small. We invite do-it-yourselfers—individuals or groups—with skills in carpentry, plumbing, painting, electrical, etc. to come in, look over our housing needs, and choose a project. Bring your own tools if possible.

LIBRARY:

Peace and Justice books for the Berrigan House Library. We recently put in new shelv-

ing - Thanks Joe Cordaro!

\$CASH MONEY\$:
Cash donations are essential to pay our property taxes, utilities, repair and maintenance of property, upkeep and gas for two vans, purchase of needed supplies, our community gardening and for the continued publication and mailing of the via pacis, a good 20% of our annual expenses.

DMCW WEBSITE

For up to date news & info on the community, the Rachel Corrie Project, Berrigan House and Occupy the World Food Prize visit the DMCW webpage: www.dmcatholicworker.org/.



Ryna-Ria holds a freshly picked radish from the DMCW Garden. Stay tuned for a garden update in the next issue of the Via Pacis.